The Impact of Chinese and Western Culture and Value Concepts on Students in Learning of College English

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Abstract—As a subject of intercultural communication, English inevitably introduces western culture and value concepts into the teaching process that has a positive effect on students’ in-depth understanding of the knowledge background and realizing rapid cognition and internalization. However, its advantages and disadvantages are associated, and students are likely to be influenced and eroded by it and lose their mother tongue culture under subliminal transmission and transfer. Therefore, the positive and negative effects of western culture and value concepts on students in college students’ English teaching can help the realization of developing their strengths and avoid their weaknesses and promote win-win situation if such situation can be correctly recognized.

Keywords—college English; intercultural communication; value concepts; infiltration

I. INTRODUCTION

As an important part of modern teaching system, college English aims to cultivate comprehensive talents who are familiar with Western humanities, geography, local customs and conditions, with solid professional knowledge. Against the background of global economic and social integration, foreign affairs, culture, economy and trade, journalism, teaching and research, science and other fields are in considerable demand for sophisticated English talents and propose more stringent requirements because cultural trade and interpersonal communication activities are becoming more and more frequent in various countries. In order to effectively satisfy the needs of society, college English must pay more attention to cultivating students’ intercultural communication and communicative ability. Through the explanations and dissemination of Western cultural background and value concepts, students can deepen their understanding and cognition of knowledge in order to improve their English cultural literacy. However, some unhealthy cultural trends and value concepts may infiltrate into it and bring about a kind of cultural colonization which is more concealed and wrapped in the form of legal coat in the constant conflict and collision of the central culture, which affects students’ ideological cognition, even erodes students’ soul, thus losing their adherence to and belief of their mother tongue culture.

Therefore, this paper makes a thorough analysis of the impact of Chinese and Western cultures and value concepts on students in college English learning, which is of great practical significance in controlling the direction and content of western culture teaching and guiding students to form cognitive and identifying abilities.

II. THE FOUNDATION OF CHINESE AND WESTERN CULTURE AND VALUE CONCEPT COMMUNICATION IN COLLEGE ENGLISH LEARNING

English is a linguistic form of cross-cultural communication and there are established differences between English and Chinese mother tongue. It is difficult to understand and master the contents of the textbooks in depth without understanding the differences of Western cultural knowledge in teaching, which results in the unequivalence of output and acquisition of English language, or even deviation. Therefore, the dissemination of western culture and value concepts is the key node in college English subject learning.

A. The Essential Requirements of Linguistic Differences Promoting the Dissemination and Cognition of Western Culture

There is a great difference between English and Chinese because their different cultural regions they derive. Therefore, the improvement of English language, literature and cultural communication and other abilities depends on the input of a certain amount of western culture and value concepts in college English subject learning. The convenience and applicability of modern computer networks and intelligent terminals make it possible for students to acquire Western cultural content through various kinds of means, such as network, video courseware, audio and video communication carrier, TV broadcasting, English news, cultural and recreational activities and examinations, and to further understand and recognize western cultural background, thinking mode and behavioral logic. For example, “dragon” is the noble fetish in Chinese national culture, but it is the incarnation of the devil in the western language. Because Western culture has a crush on dogs very much, it often uses “love me, love my dog” to express love for the dogs. The differences between the two linguistic cultures create different
meanings of words. Therefore, only by deeply understanding the western culture and value concepts can we truly perceive and recognize the differences between English language and Chinese language. From the perspective of culture, this paper explores the real connotation interpreted by English language in different contexts, so as to lighten the burden of English learning and cognition, thus realizing the fast memory and internalization of knowledge, and truly grasping the position of English language learning.

B. The Social Demand for Ability Improvement Impelling the Spread and Infiltration of Western Culture

College English learning belongs to advanced education, which no longer stays at the level of theoretical knowledge of language, but emphasizes the control and flexible application ability of language. Moreover, because modern society has higher requirements for the ability of intercultural communication and communication of English talents, English has already become a subject with both instrumentality and culture. What is more, College English Course Requirements promulgated by the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education emphasizes that "college English is not only a basic language course, but also is a quality education course that expands the application and understands the western culture and value concepts". In view of this, various kinds of teaching, reading materials and literature materials have been integrated into the Western cultural concepts, thinking logic, customs and manners in the course of college English subject learning. The imperceptible dissemination and infiltration of these cultural value concepts enable students to unconsciously absorb more cultural knowledge. Moreover, in the process of accelerating the development of modern global economic integration, the dissemination and exchange of western culture in language learning are more frequent, and the scale, scope and speed are all on the rise, which has a more serious impact on students' cultural cognition.

III. THE POSITIVE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN CULTURE AND VALUE CONCEPTS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

The positive effect of learning Chinese and Western cultures and value concepts in English subject is to help students thoroughly and correctly perceive and understand the content of teaching knowledge, reduce cognitive bias caused by linguistic differences, and realize the language application ability of "article is in line with the word meaning". Therefore, it can produce "productive bilingual" phenomenon based on cultural identity, that is, students can form "multicultural person" on the basis of cultural identity, master the hidden cultural background knowledge of English language, and realize the promotion of cross-cultural communication on the basis of retaining the native language and culture.

A. Guiding Students to Form Cultural Identity

According to the lexical meaning interpretation of encyclopedia, the so-called cultural identity that is a positive judgment of cultural value specifically refers to the value utility of the new culture within the group or the heterogeneous culture outside the group affirmed by the specific cultural groups and the members of cultural group. At the same time, it is an attitude and way of recognizing the cultural value standard and the group that achieves the cultural identity can accept and understand its profound meaning. The original intention of the dissemination of Western culture and value concepts in college English subject learning is to enable students to achieve the goal of linguistic learning based on their recognition and understanding of English language and culture in which will highlight the infiltration and influence of culture. Students are encapsulated by Western culture and can transcend the cognitive limitations of their native culture under the support by multiple communication paths and carriers, to show an inclusive attitude towards Western cultural concepts and form a correct cognition and understanding that can be flexibly introduced into English subject learning. In the blending of culture and language, students can realize the two-way improvement of language knowledge and ability, which achieves the established learning purpose.

B. Promoting Students to Construct "Productive Bilingualism"

"Productive bilingual" phenomenon intuitively reflects the positive effect of Western culture and value concepts on students. Students realize the understanding and recognition of English target language and culture based on the premise of cultural identity and on the basis of retaining mother tongue and culture. Both of them are developed equally and complement each other. In the process of transmission of western culture and value concepts, mother tongue culture that will not be changed or threatened by the spread and infiltration of Western culture promotes each other with western culture and together deepens students' formation of "productive bilingualism" to achieve the effect of 1+1>2. The dissemination and interpretation of western culture and value concepts only enable students to grasp the regularity of English language and realize the improvement of students' cognition ability, aesthetic ability and emotional ability, which can help them jump out of the thinking pattern of their mother tongue. Through situational perception and experience, students can extract their logical thinking and behavioral patterns from the learning of Western culture so as to exercise and develop the cognitive and thinking ability of English language. At the same time, they can also think in different positions and examine English language culture and situational connotation from the perspective and cultural concepts of westerners to gain a sense of identity and understanding of the culture of the English target language. We should extract their productive orientation from the learning of Western culture, and thus mother tongue and culture can mutually promote and deepen each other.

IV. THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF WESTERN CULTURE AND VALUE CONCEPTS ON COLLEGE STUDENTS

The relevance of language and culture has existed since ancient times. Language is the carrier of cultural transmission, while culture is the basis and prerequisite for realizing language recognition and understanding. For English language teaching, the introduction of culture can reduce the cognitive differences of language, but everything has two sides. The infiltration of Chinese and Western cultures and value
concepts in college English subject learning can easily highlight cultural colonialism, which erodes national culture, drives students to deviate from the normal track of cultural cognition, thus causing the problem of cultural aphasia of mother tongue.

A. Shaking Students' Belief in Mother Tongue Culture

English is currently one of the most widely used languages in the world. Its communication shows unusual dominant, which is mainly reflected in the population and scope of language use. As a carrier of cultural communication, language also shows cultural colonialism under the guidance of unhealthy trends of thought. As a basic subject of language, college English pays attention to the cultivation of students' comprehensive English cultural literacy, which is the necessary prerequisite for the improvement of students' language knowledge and ability. However, students independently or independently absorb Western culture and ideas in the face of numerous and complicated culture and value concepts in the process. Therefore, college students are easily attracted by the illusory appearance because they lack the correct cognitive and mature identification ability, and they can not recognize the truth and falsehood of Western cultural ideas in the conflict and collision between Chinese and Western cultures. As a result, they are trapped in the puzzle and confusion of cognition and can not extricate themselves from it. At the same time, they produce a lot of expectations and imaginations about Western cultural life, value concepts and ways of behavior. In the long run, these Western ideas will enter their minds and heart and shake their adherence to and belief in their mother tongue culture, thus gradually weakening and losing their mother tongue culture. Ultimately, it is bound to deviate from the essence and original intention of the promotion and development of Chinese and Western cultures and value concepts in college English learning. Students' language knowledge and ability of cross-cultural differences have not been effectively cultivated, but they have suffered from western cultural erosion.

B. Causing the Problem of Cultural Aphasia

The phenomenon of cultural aphasia is a key issue in the spread of Chinese and Western cultures and value concepts in English learning. In modern English teaching, the introduction of Western cultures is over-emphasized, while the lack of integration of mother tongue culture affects the spread and guidance of national cultures, which leads to the imbalance between Chinese and Western cultures and has negative effects on the improvement of students' cross-cultural communication and communicative competence. The infiltration and interpretation of western culture and value concepts is only a tool for English subject learning, not a path of colonial dissemination and erosion. Its effect lies in guiding students to recognize the differences between Chinese and English language through the cognition of cultural differences, so as to experience the meanings, emotions and connotations expressed in English language and literature from the perspective and emotions of Westerners, and to really control the skills and abilities of the use of language and communication. Therefore, we should not blindly strengthen the "beauty" of Western culture and conceal the "dross" of Western culture in English subject learning, and such degree should be well controlled. Or else, college students may easily form cognitive bias and produce excessive yearning and expectations for Western culture. Consequently, the cultural identity of mother tongue may be replaced by the Western cultural identity, which will threaten the inheritance and development of Chinese language culture, thus making students over-praise Western culture and having a feeling of alienation from mother tongue culture in a imperceptible way.

V. CONCLUSION

As the key stage for the formation of outlook on life and world, college students are easily attracted to and trapped in the pluralistic and novel Western cultures and value concepts in college English learning because their behavioral cognition is still in the formative stage and their thirst for knowledge strongly exists. As a result, they lose the correct cognition towards their mother tongue culture in the process of imperceptible influence. Thus, by sorting out the influence of Western culture and value concepts on college students, it can help to understand the confusions and puzzles of students in cultural cognition, and at the same time, also promote them to rebuild the self-confidence of their mother tongue culture, adhere to the position of national culture, and better discriminate the erosion of Western unhealthy thoughts and hegemonic culture.

REFERENCES


